



Exclusively yours



TRIKAL ~~EXCLUSIVITY~~

Exclusively Yours

R. K. Laxman

Rasipuram Krishnaswamy Laxman was born and educated in Mysore. Soon after he graduated from the University of Mysore, he began cartooning for the *Free Press Journal*, a newspaper in Bombay. Six months later he joined the *Times of India* as staff cartoonist, a newspaper he has been with for over sixty years. He has written and published numerous short stories, essays and travel articles, some of which have been collected in the book, *The Distorted Mirror*. He has also written three works of fiction, *The Hotel Riviera*, *The Messenger* and *Servants of India*. Penguin has published several collections of Laxman's cartoons in the series *The Best of Laxman* and *Laugh with Laxman*. *The Tunnel of Time*, Laxman's autobiography, and his most recent collection of cartoons, *Brushing Up the Years: A Cartoonist's History of India 1947 to the Present*, are also available from Penguin.

R.K. Laxman has been awarded the prestigious Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India. He has won many awards for his cartoons, including Asia's top journalism award, the Ramon Magsaysay Award, in 1984.

R.K. Laxman lives in Mumbai.

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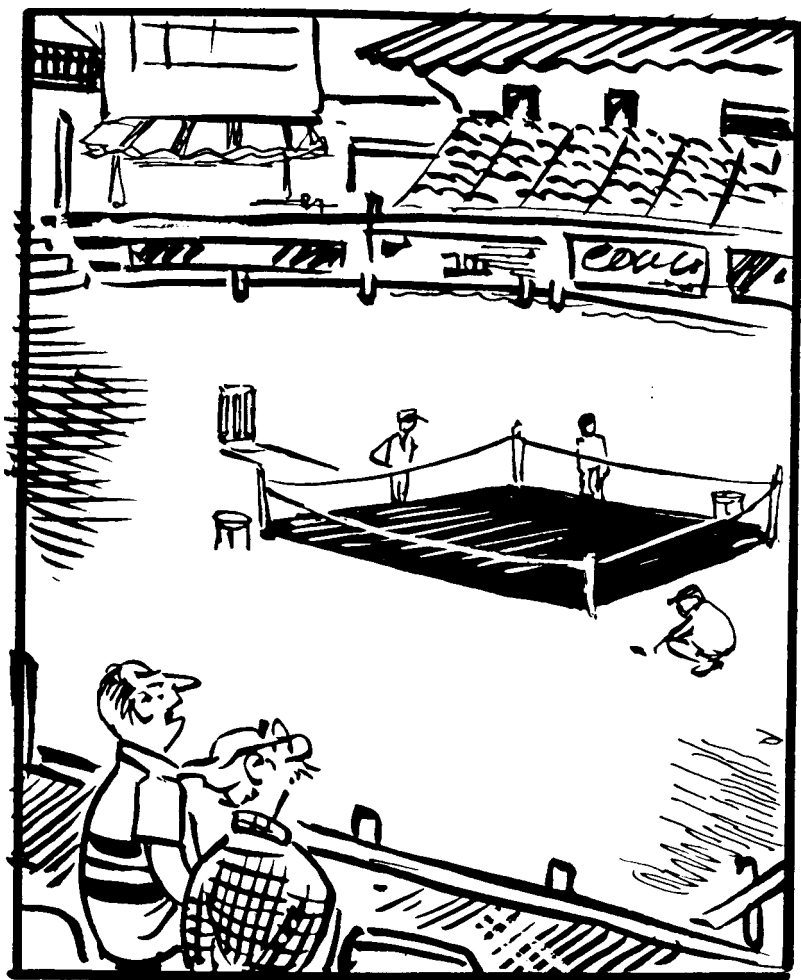
More than losing the series what hurts me is that the autograph hunters have stopped approaching us!



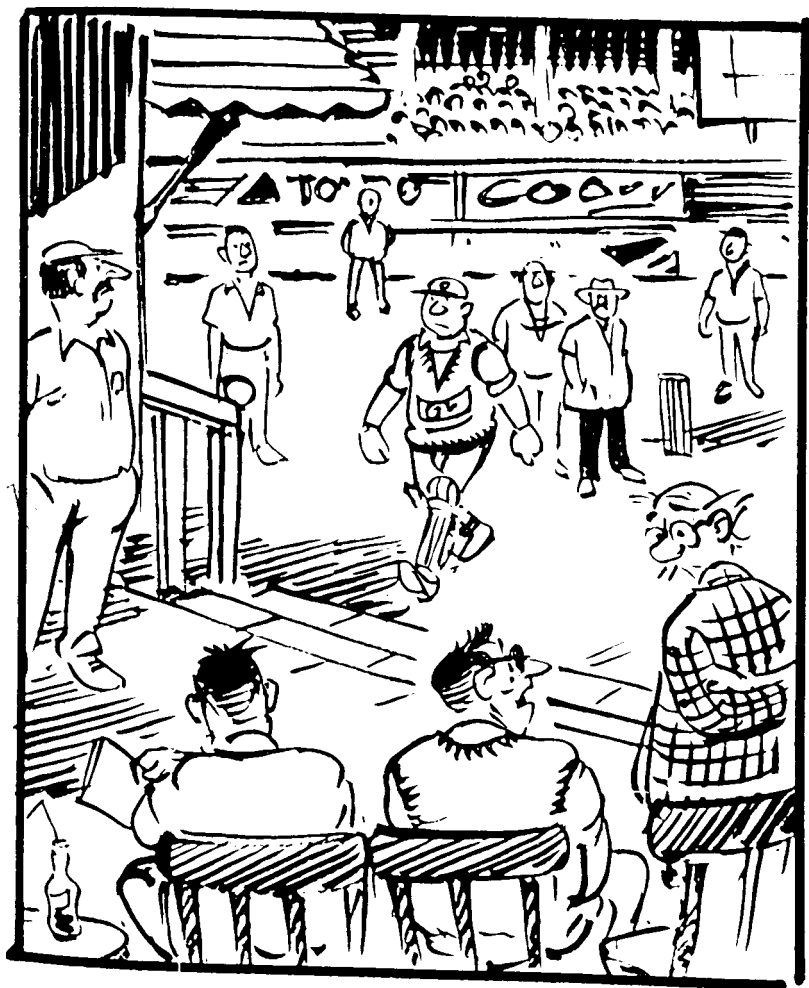
... politics, economics, business, cinema, law, cricket,
etc. Persons belonging to these professions are in the
cells over there ...



You have always wanted to be a tennis champion. Now why this sudden unhealthy desire to join a cricket team?



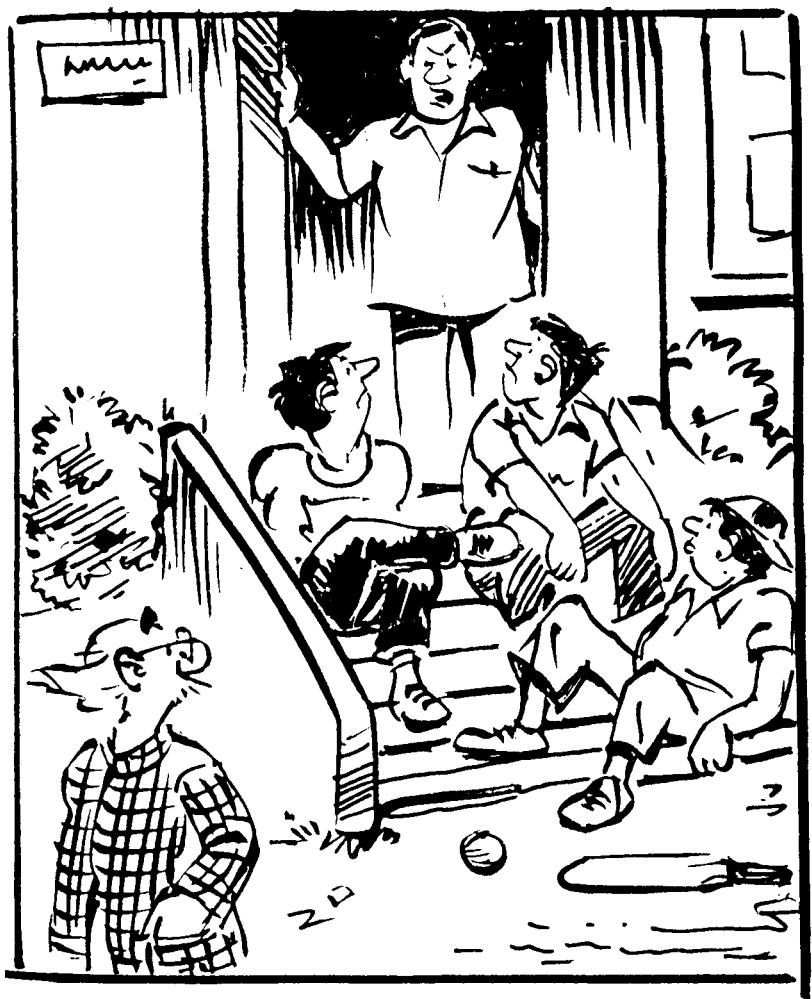
Boxing ring! To think once they used to play the gentleman's game!



It's going from bad to worse. He forgot the bat!



I'm told he has gone underground! Has he? I didn't know he was interested in cricket!



Taking all the time about crime, scams, fraud, back-stabbing. Don't you have any other topic except cricket?



He is asking forty lakhs for not making public your offer of twenty lakhs for match fixing!



... people must learn to be self-reliant leaving us alone to attend to our party affairs, and not depend on us ...



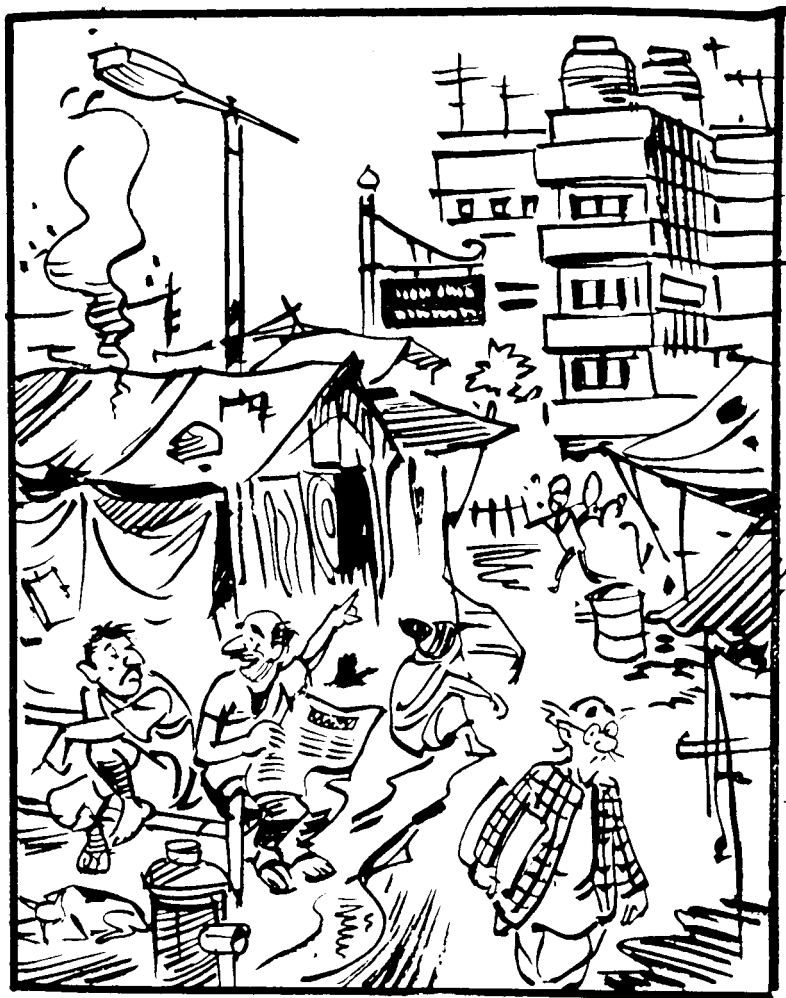
Be careful about what you eat! There are quite a few cases of food poisoning around, I understand!



This officer is suitable for the post, sir. He is senior, his record is clean, and he has only two cases of corruption charges against him!



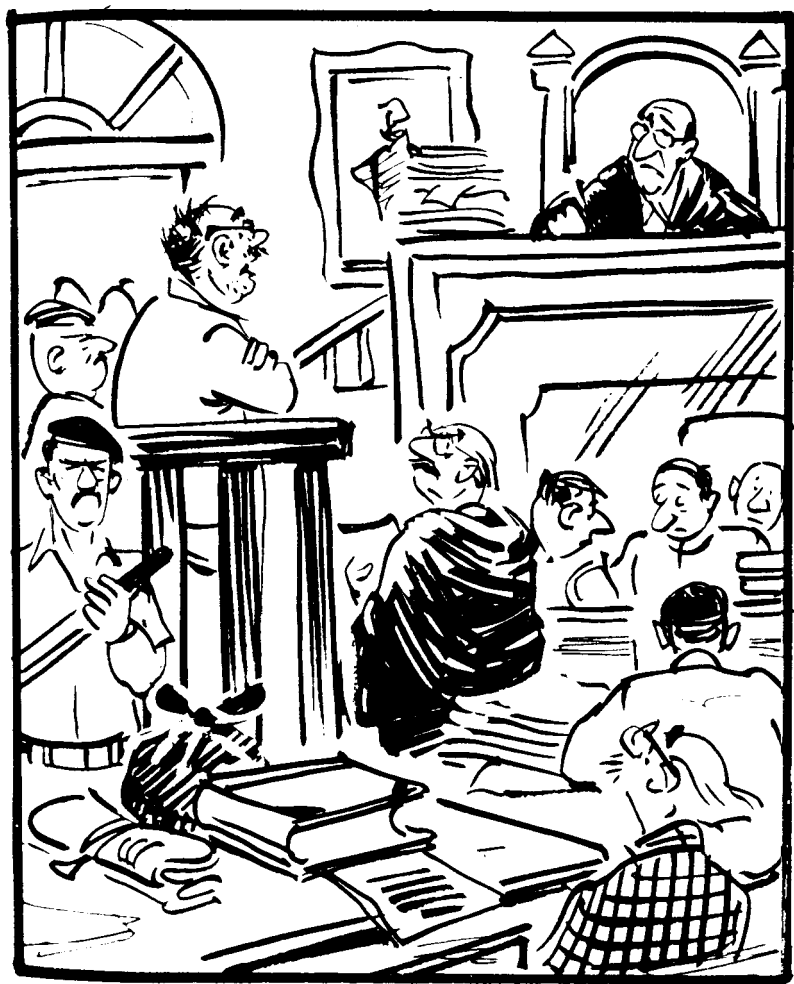
Done it at last! You will be arrested but not jailed! Even if you are jailed you won't be moved out! Even if you are moved out . . .



*At last they are taking action against unauthorized constructions.
Those buildings will be demolished soon!*



*Don't you know him? He is the most famous man in the country
He wrote objectionable literature, painted obscene pictures, produced
vulgar movies . . .*



Thanks Your Honour for granting bail and for only 50 lakhs bail bond for a 200-crore scam!



I didn't call on him to discuss anything. It was just a courtesy call.



I like him for that, straightaway sanctioning 100 crores for our uplift. At his last visit it was 90 crores, before that 65 crores.



*All those who have left the party have done so on moral grounds.
We have nothing to worry about. We are still in a majority.*



Alarming increase in crime! Some cheat impersonating as an extortionist collected the three lakhs we had demanded, he says.



Hello, it's urgent. If you are tapping this, kindly tap my husband and tell him to call me immediately. His phone is continuously busy!



*Your slum development scheme has been very successful, sir!
What was small then has developed now up to the far end!*



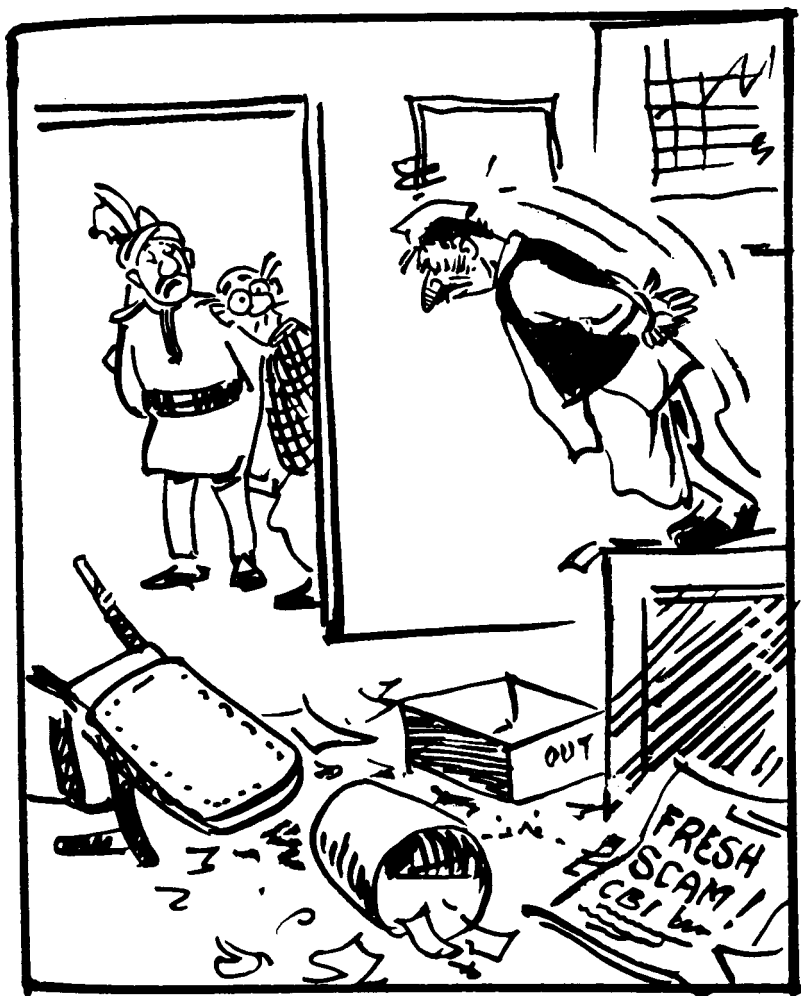
He swears he didn't paint it to hurt anyone's sensibility. But how are we to be sure of it?



I think it's called off and they have returned to work. It's gone dead again!



It's due to the traffic jams! Instead of colour TVs and washing machines we must try offering free bicycles, sir.



He has done it ten times already! It's to get bail on medical grounds, I think.



A 100-crore project in the ninth plan, sir—a maximum security court for trying VIPs and VVIPs.



There's so much demand for effigies these days that being a social worker he makes them to help various worthy causes.



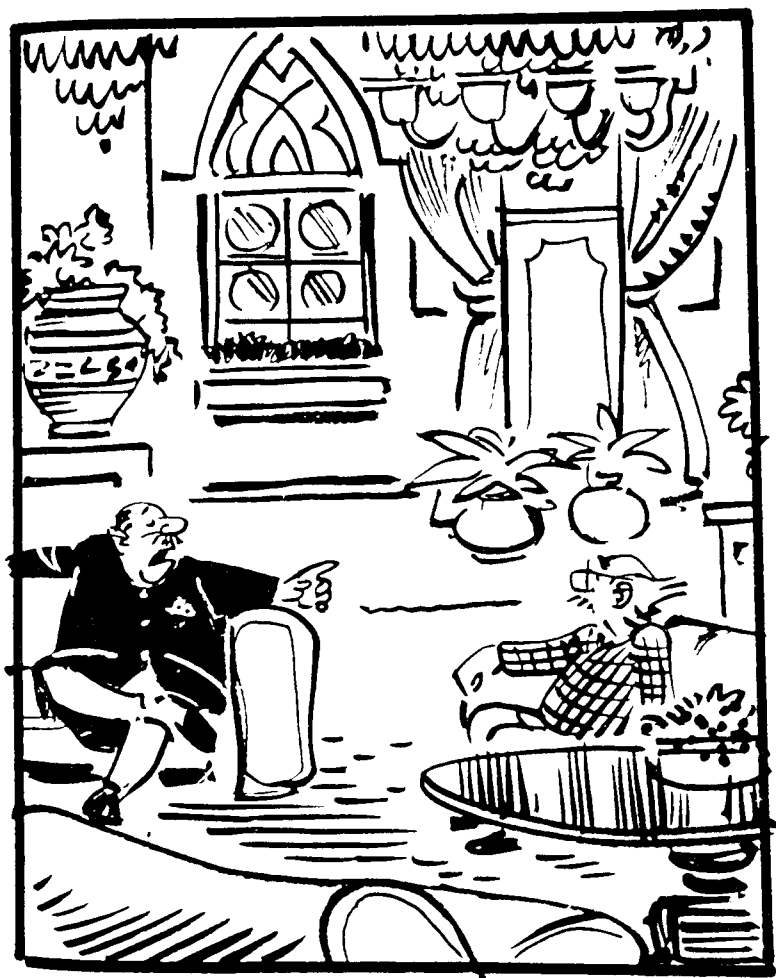
Yes, I am going abroad to address a world conference—my secretary knows where it is and its purpose.



I've absolutely no assets except this house which I built . . . a little farm bought long ago . . . a housing complex which my admirers gave me . . . and . . .



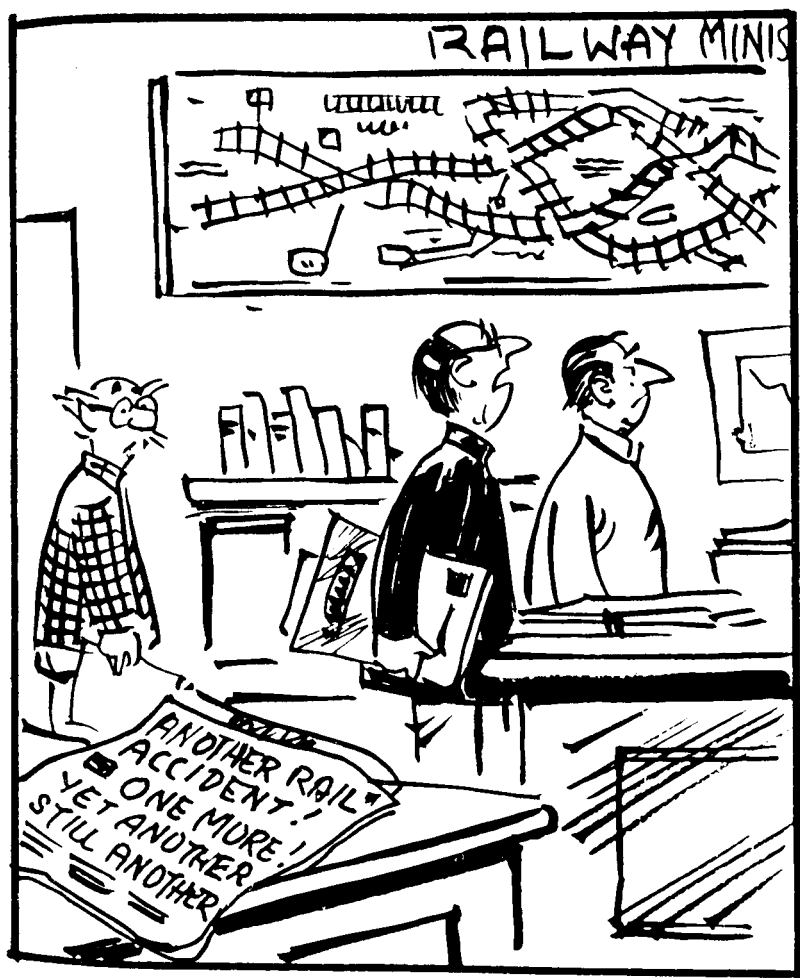
Yes, I was the winner in the 1980 contest. It was OK then. But I object to it now because I feel it's against our traditional culture!



I was in politics working as a humble Gandhian devoting all my time to eradicate corruption. But it was impossible to eradicate it!



Something fishy, sir! He is complaining of black-out, uneasiness, chest pains and yet he swears he is not a business tycoon or ex-minister!



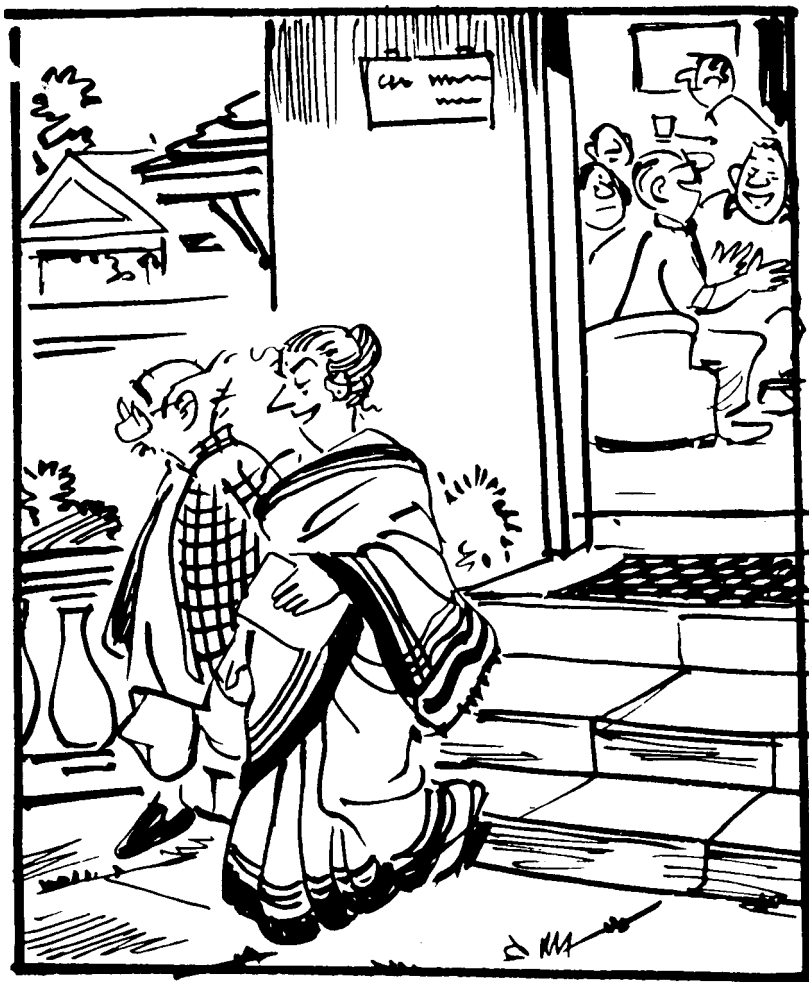
It's not possible to visit all the disaster sites, sir. Why not take an aerial survey as it's done for floods and droughts!



More coming! Unless we set free pick-pockets, thieves, smugglers, etc. we can't accommodate company chairmen, directors, bankers, ministers, etc.



Confiscating our jewellery and cash is unfair! After all you made sacrifices and rendered selfless services as a national leader.



*It was a nice get together after a long time. Nobody spoke about
scams, corruption, bail for over seven minutes.*



Sixty thousand crores loss! But for the cyclone we would never have known we were so rich!



Good news! Soon we can buy food grains since we can't afford living above the poverty line for long!



This display is against code of conduct rules. But he says the old building will collapse if the posters are removed.



I knew this would happen. rushing about madly from place to place saying only he could give a stable government.



Thank God! I was worried all along that you were an honest upright man!



I don't forget. Last time when I came, you asked for drinking water, didn't you?



Seems to be an honest fellow. Records show he never takes bribes, only gives.



... still, still, let me repeat that the law and order situation here is far better than in other states.



That's a part of the anti-corruption drive, I am told, sir.



He used to sleep when others spoke. Now he has started sleeping listening to his own speech.



This is the mistake of putting them in a special jail like this. Now he says he doesn't want bail!



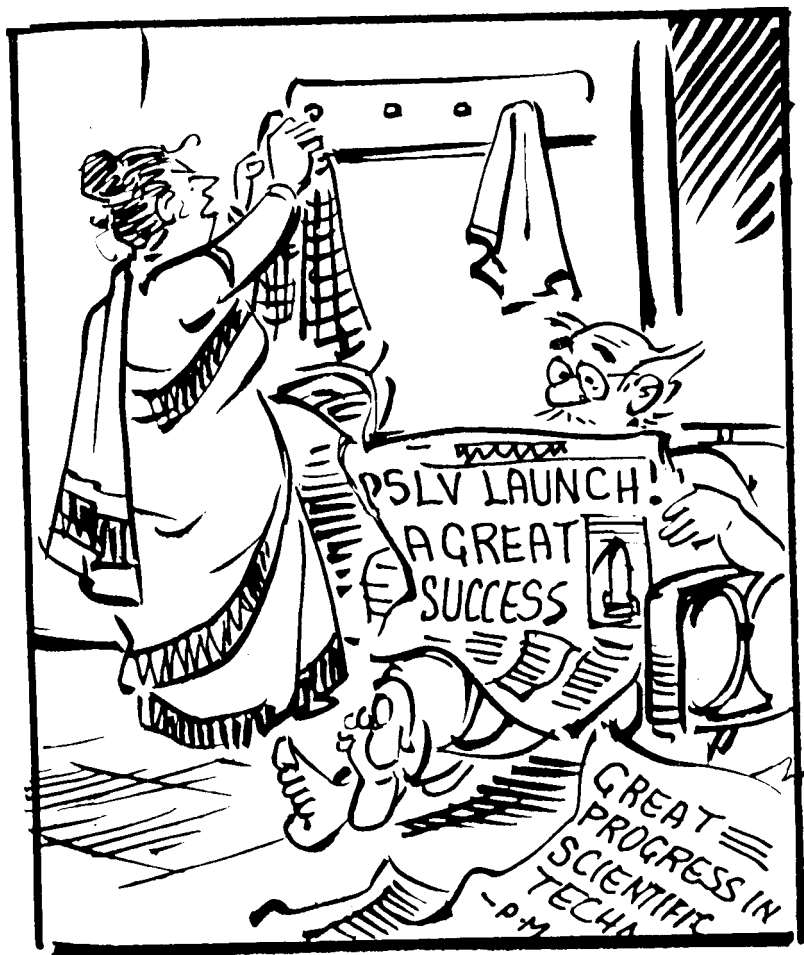
Poor fellow is completely disoriented. He is going about asking everyone which party he belongs to.



Cost of petrol, gas, power, transport, etc. have been hiked. Do I still get 50 paise only, sir?



*Wait! . . . a red maruti drew up . . . a man getting out . . .
autorickshaw came . . . policemen are standing . . . let's cross over
after the encounter!*



Now, they should do something to our trains too, so that they start off and move on safely!



What happened to your safari suit, the expensive shoes, the rolex watch? Mid-term polls soon! Right?



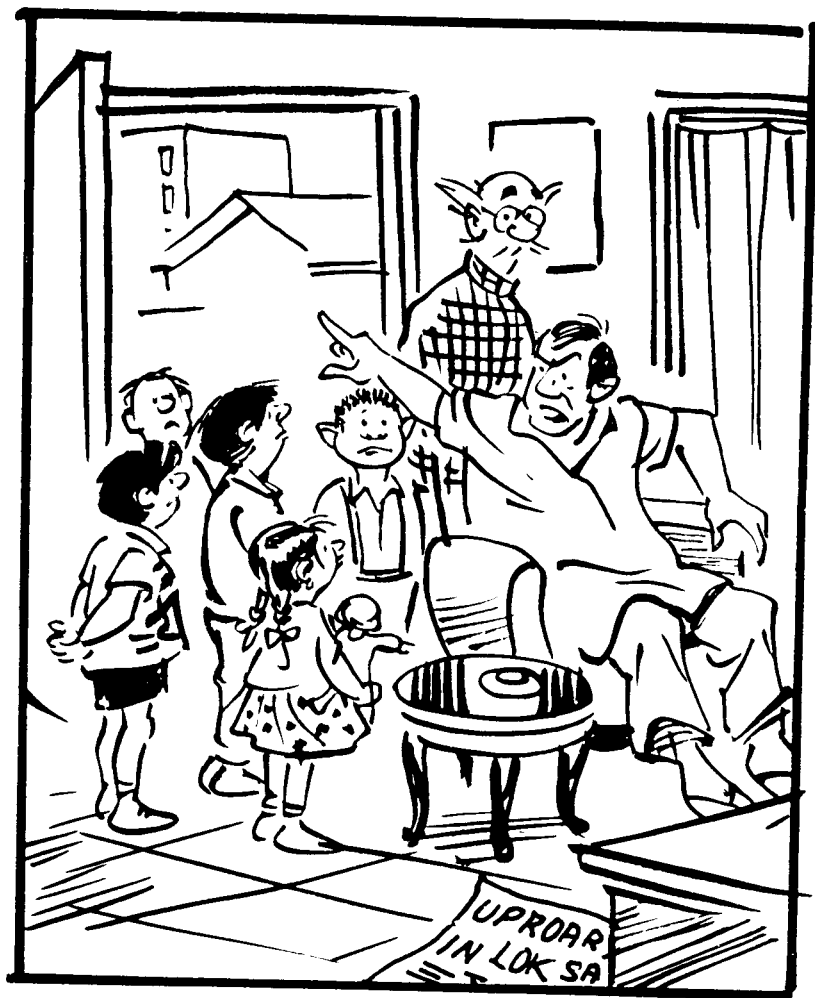
Such a relief it's over! Now flights will take off on schedule with regular normal delays of an hour or two . . .



I think he is busy preparing for the assembly debate . . .



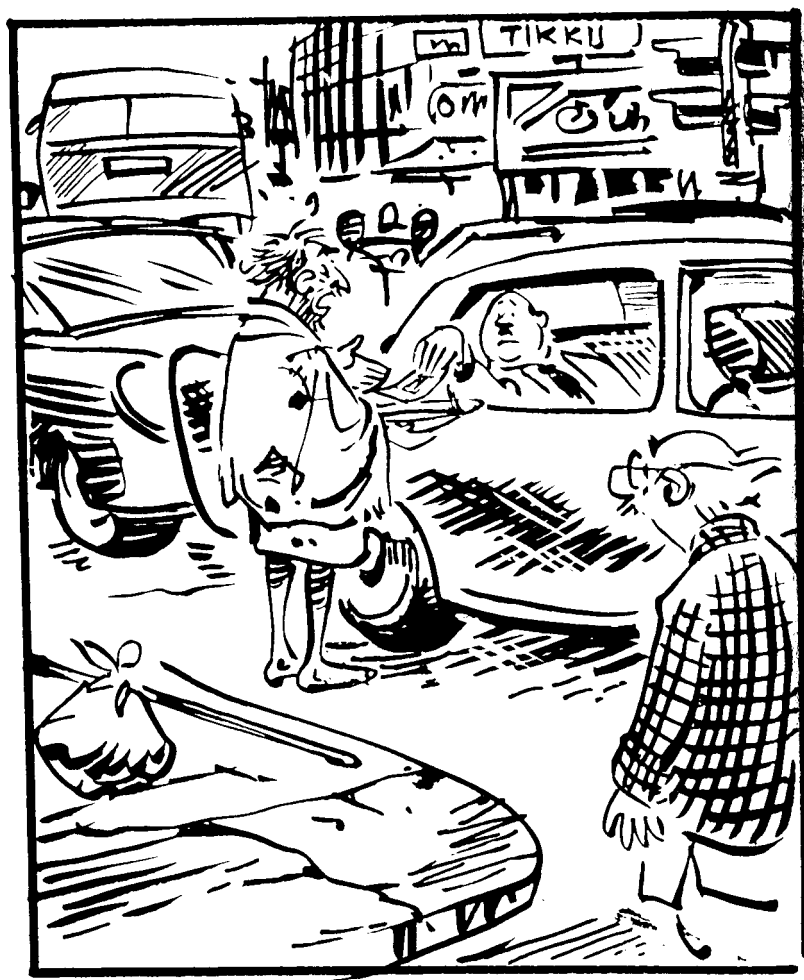
Your intention to save the party at all cost is OK, but you can't ask that cha to lead the arty just because his name is Gandhi.



No! Go out and play LS or RS in the street. You think you are grown-ups to play it inside the house?



They are fooling him. There is no such traditional headgear in this region!



Five rupees? What can I do with it? I can't buy Coca-cola, Pepsi, McDonald's hamburger, Kentucky Fried Chicken . . .



No, I didn't buy the vegetables. I don't want you to be caught living beyond your known sources of income!



. . . Oh, I see! We don't carry so much cash. You must start accepting credit cards from now on!



Don't you want to graduate, go to USA, become an NRI, and be proud and loyal to our motherland?



Of course, he is very much a minister with a portfolio. But people believe he is a minister without portfolio, the way he functions.



*... order an enquiry into the mob violence on the police and then
police violence on the mob followed by mob violence on the
police ...*



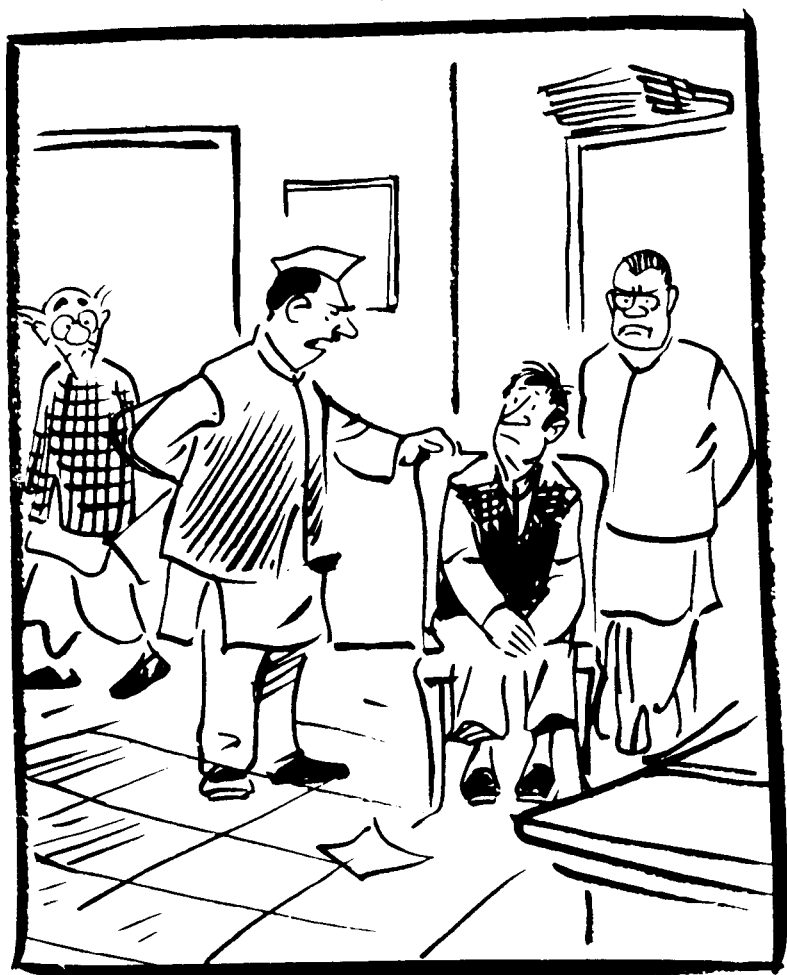
Unbelievable! Initially the cost of the project was Rs 65 lakhs. It has gone up now to Rs 15.75 crores in twenty years!



What do you mean, 'more'! Don't say you are joining those who are going to be on the 24-hour protest fast!



He is grateful for rushing food during the recent drought. He is asking what to eat when there is no drought, sir.



*We know you have joined our party. That's not enough. Which group?
That's important!*



If the population can't be controlled, at least they should make bigger scooters!



No problem. I'll let you have \$3 billion, if your situation is that bad. I'll be getting \$6 billion from the World Bank, you see.



He is taking a tough stand. He says under no circumstances will he take note of the boycott of the function.



Please, I can't answer your questions because I have not yet become familiar with our national crisis as I was inducted into the cabinet only a few days ago!



... finally, tomorrow we will take to the street! If that too fails as a last resort we will undertake a protest march from Calcutta to Calicut.



You are right, 10% cut in perks, salary, travels, transport . . . there is no point in serving the people any more . . .



As part of the efficiency drive he was prematurely retired, his predecessor was suspended and the new appointee is going to be sacked, sir.



Remind me to tell the High Command that it is impossible to convince these people that the price hike is for their own good!



Where is the cash? Silly boy, didn't you read the morning paper?



Don't be critical. We are dealing with it step by step. First we condemned it. Then we said it shouldn't be tolerated. Then we said it should be crushed. Then . . .



What I like about him is that he is truly a loyal, disciplined soldier of the party!



Our election defeats are due to infighting, indiscipline, disloyalty, disunity, back-stabbing, etc. And not due to the unpopularity of the Congress.



Yes, we found out why we lost. But we simply can't find out why we won!



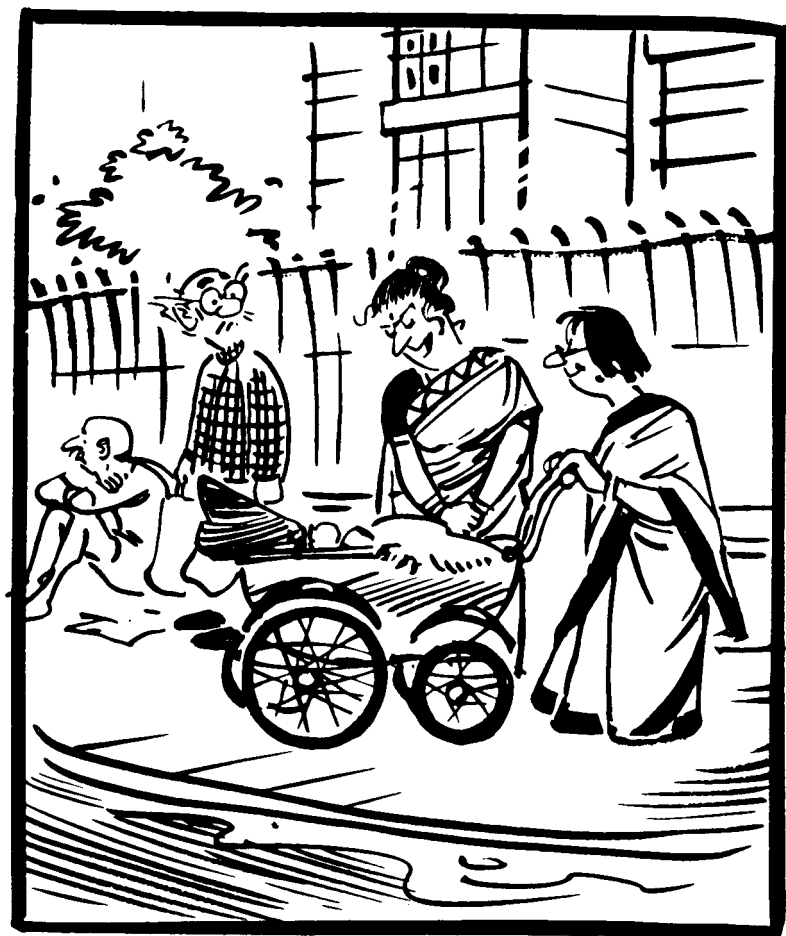
Unlike the other projects this has proved the most economical, sir. The loss due to delay in execution has so far been only Rs 12 crores!



You think this is the problem and this is the solution. But I think this is the solution and this is the problem!



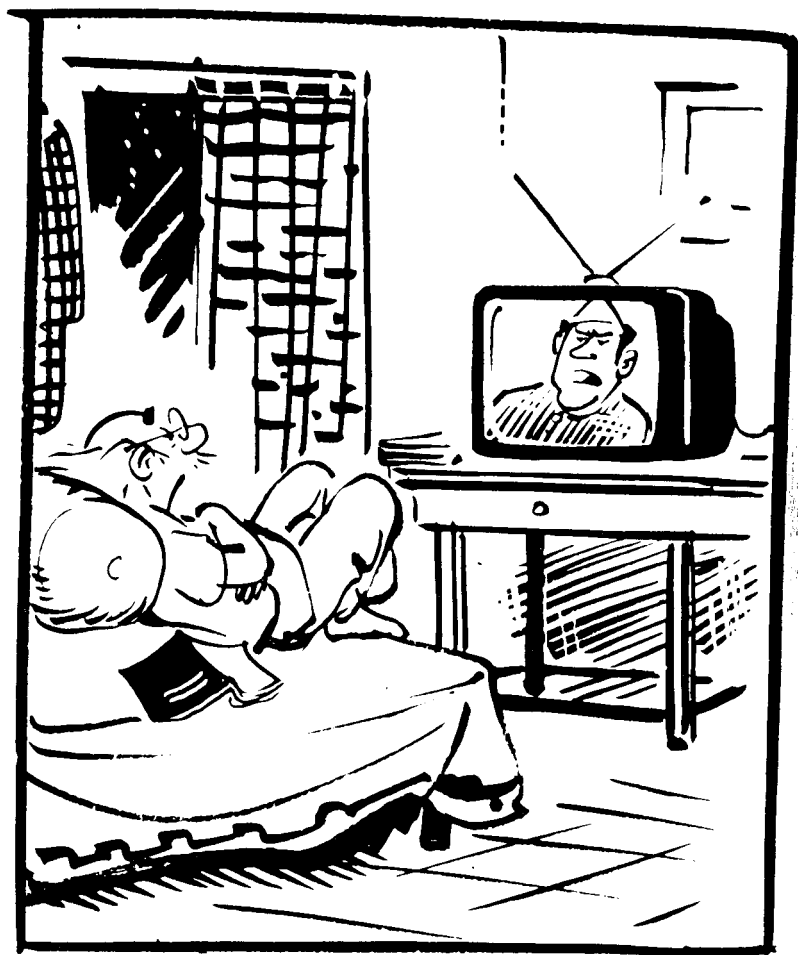
No incriminating documents, no cash, no FERA violation! How does the poor man run his business?



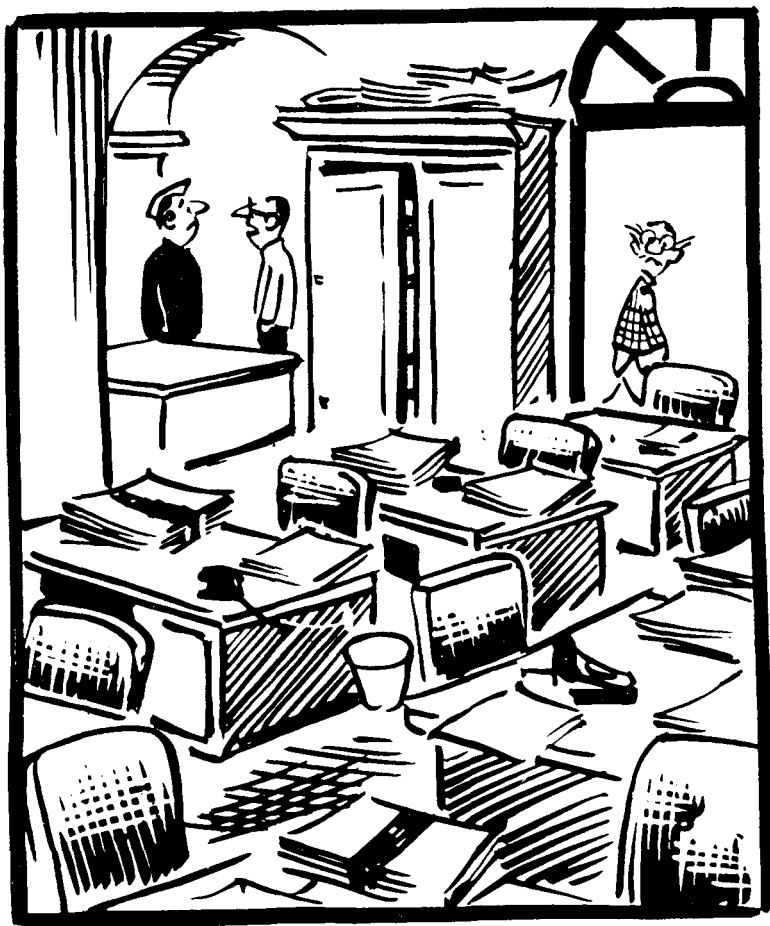
No, just wishing that he should become a great Indian is no good! You must pray that he becomes a great non-resident Indian!



Wonderful day at the office. I was not sacked, suspended or prematurely retired today!



... it is intolerable! Something has got to be done! My order that I shouldn't be given so much exposure everyday on the TV, has gone unheeded



Since you removed some relatives of yours the department has become terribly understaffed, sir!



Why are you worried? I am not responsible for losing my image and popularity. My advisers are responsible for it.



If you had come a second before, you could have seen him! He came in this way from a tour and left that way on another tour!



It's no use, little fellow. It's not like old times! Pray for the oil price to go up again.



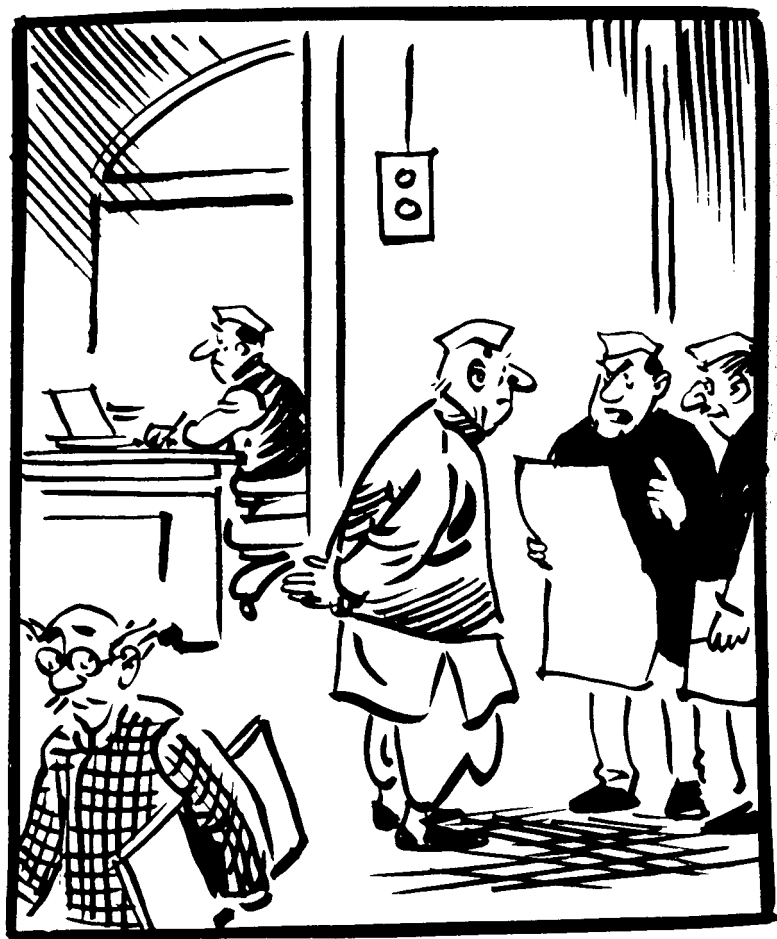
*No, the intruders did not take away any cash, jewellery or other valuables.
The CBI had taken them away earlier!*



Here is a summary of the Commission's 1800-page report, sir— it says we must appoint a commission to examine it and report.



... at one stage, I gave up all hope and thought I would not escape! But, luckily, I was honourably acquitted ultimately!



Let's take all the signatures first. When the campaign starts we will use them for or against him depending on the circumstances.



No, it's the other way; the one attacking the Congress rule is the veteran Congressman, and its loyal defender has newly joined from the Opposition.



Between these two blunders we advise you to commit this one, sir. It is easier to explain to the people.



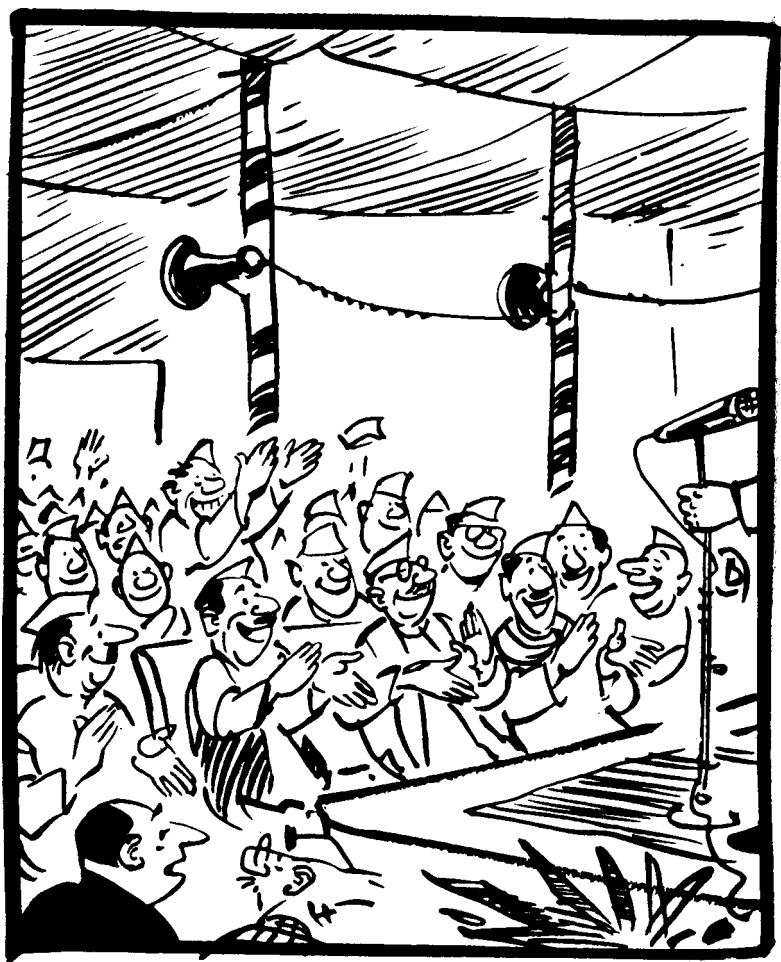
Sorry, no comments! All that I can say is that no action will be taken against me for the muddles and blunders I have been responsible for!



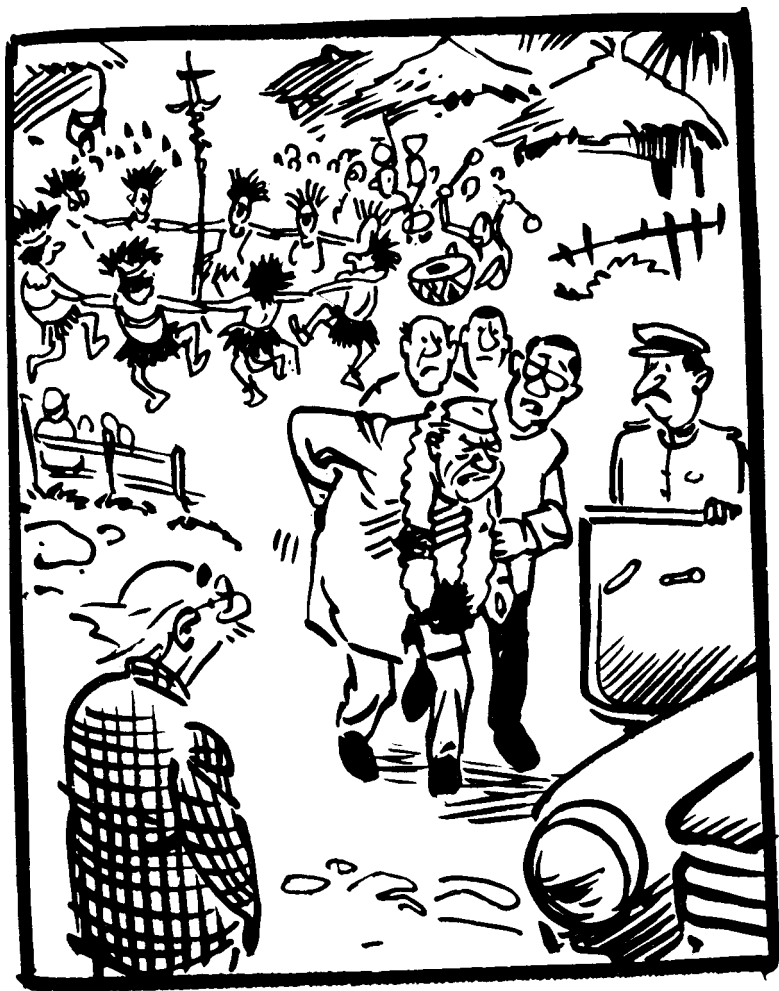
Why, why am I shifted from here to do the party work? I have been loyal, hard-working, efficient



... the ST bus plunged down here on Thursday! Over there another rolled down on Wednesday! Twenty-five metres away was Tuesday's accident, further up Monday's and



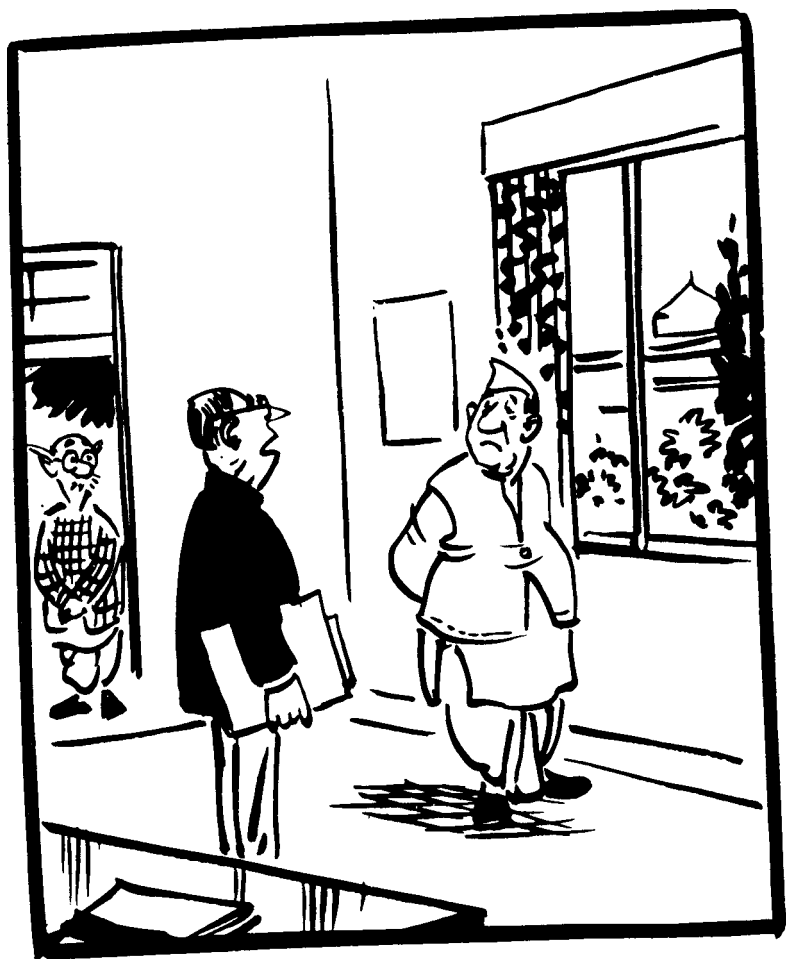
Funny fellows! He has just lashed out at them for weakening the party, calling them lazy, selfish and corrupt . . . and they are clapping!



Could be a case of slipped disc, sir! . . . they wouldn't have minded really if you hadn't joined them!



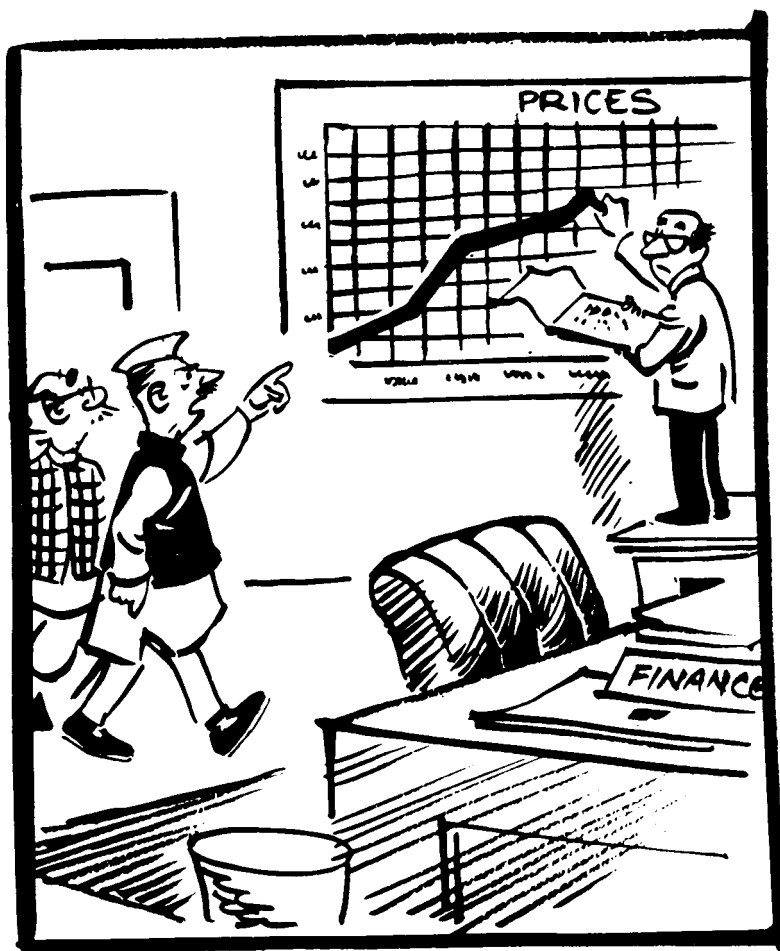
Everytime these people come they say they will go back and send us massive wheat aid. What is wheat, father?



No, sir, there's absolutely nothing to report. Everything seems nice and quiet. But you may, if you wish, air-dash to Delhi to be on the safer side.



That chap came and put it on me. Is this the traditional headgear of this region? I have my own doubts.



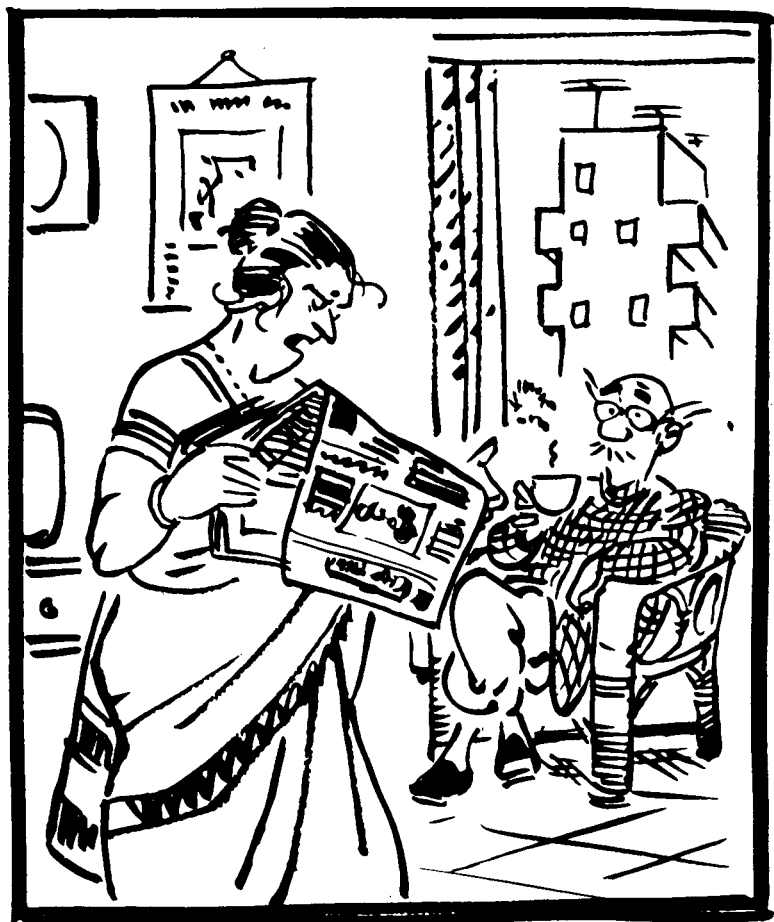
*What will the visitors think if they look at such an alarming picture?
Remove it and put a small chart there!*



But, in my opinion, this one is clearly a case of language issue and that a case of demand for statehood!



You mean you set fire to the bus without any reason like linguistic, religious boundary? You must be an utterly irresponsible citizen!



Oh, the police caught him! Then he couldn't be a terrorist but an ordinary criminal!



You are so inaccessible, I figured that the only way to see you was to sneak in here in this disguise. I am actually a party member!



Come in, come in! These security fellows have become extremely cautious nowadays and won't let you carry anything in!



The party simply can't waste time like this day after day doing nothing to serve the people—we must consider at least calling a day's total bandh!



I didn't think there's anything political behind this. Maybe it's because they are used to seeing you in the villain's role in all the movies.



They can't find them anywhere! Can you remember where I kept all the incriminating papers? I will be ruined if they are lost!



Don't you believe the press, sir. It always prints sensational lies! Your image hasn't suffered a bit. It remains just as it ever was!



That's a truly honest man! He has kept his sons uneducated and unemployed. He doesn't want to give room for any suspicion that he shows undue favours to his family members.



Supposing they stop making false allegations and start making true ones, what will you do then?



... to counter the misguided move by the Opposition, we will also organize a mammoth rally in support of the unbearable burden of price hike on the Common Man ... !



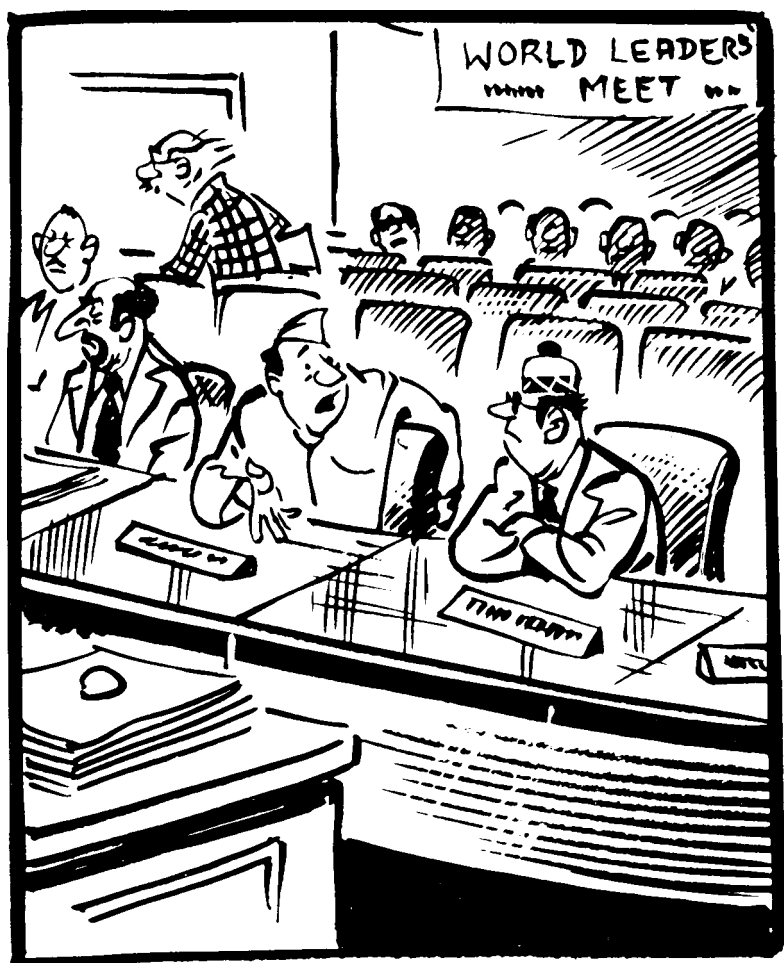
Your adviser has a point, sir. Such reactions help us to understand if our policy has popular support or not.



I have simplified my work. I read the same speech at all these functions. It has references to human rights, ecology, nuclear bomb, arms race, democracy, science



You keep bringing problems which have gone out of our hands! Don't we have any crisis which is simple and easy to handle?



Same here; I am very popular outside my country, but inside, my people don't understand me.



I checked with your PRO, sir. He says it will be more popular before this gathering to say that the economy is looking down rather than that it is looking up.



Poor chap. He emigrated to Bombay to beg, but returned because he couldn't find accommodation—on any pavement.



Save the city, save the trees, save the birds, save this, save that. Not a word about saving the people!



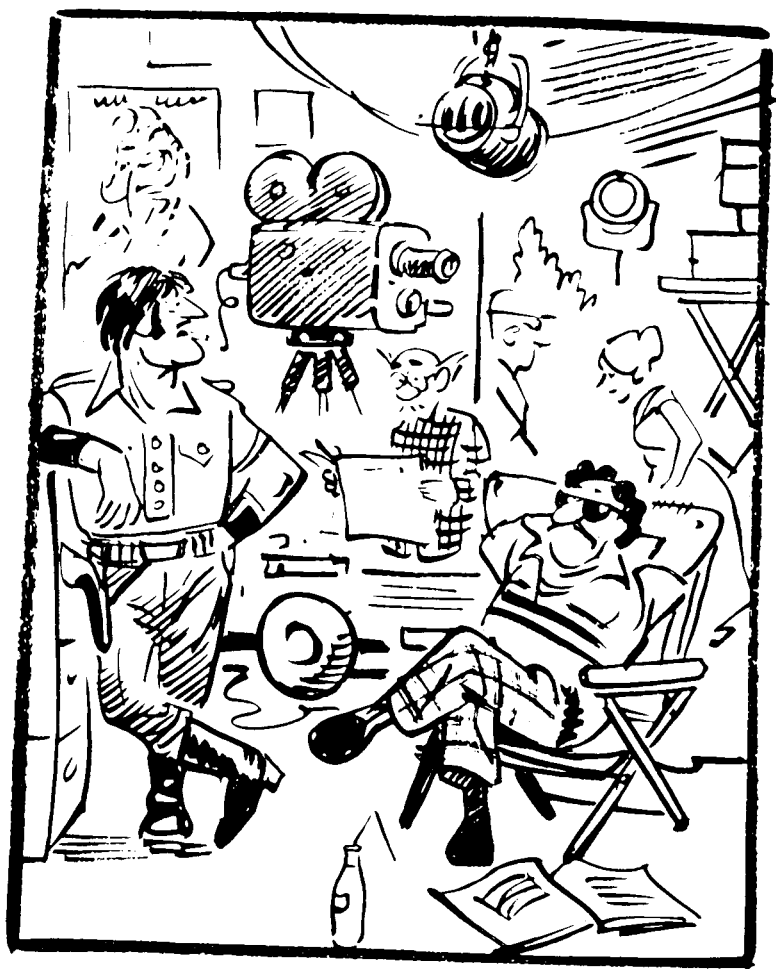
OK, we make him the PM! But whom are we to choose as PM after we bring him down? Let's think of that!



Sounds reasonable, sir. He says he can't guarantee a peaceful agitation, but only a semi-peaceful one in which no more than two buses, one private car and three shops will be burnt!



Excellent promises—too good to be wasted on a mere by-election. Let's keep them for the future general elections.



You are a matinee idol, good at sword-fight, gun-play, karate, horse riding, jumping, etc. How come you have not thought of joining the Congress Party?



The minister has warned the centre that if another Rs 168 crores is not sanctioned this project will be doomed!



... and lastly our plans for economic progress for our state; we will not allow the government to function unless our language is made the official language!



This problem cannot be solved, as you all know. As for solving the second problem there are many other problems in the way. The next one we are not solving as it will lead to other problems



Maybe they all lack honesty, integrity and loyalty, and are greedy and corrupt. But that should not make you say you won't vote. It is highly undemocratic not to vote, whatever the reason, young man!



Thanks for asking, sir. There has been no change here since your last visit. But I'm glad to see that you look very healthy, happy and carefree.



*Why did he call this press conference in such a hurry?
For anything we ask, he says 'No comments' or 'I am
not aware of it' and so on!*



An old portrait of his. He wants it to be used in the posters for his next election campaign.



Ask him to lay off! He may be your security guard, but he has no business to protect you in our party infighting!



*Formerly he just used to recite poems composed by him.
Now he has started singing in the middle of his speeches!*



*Don't keep repeating that you are innocent so frequently.
So far nobody suspects you of any scam.*



You politicians will never be happy! Look at the brighter side. If you fail to win, then you don't have to bother about fulfilling your election promises. Think of that!



Don't use this phone, sir, for discussing poll strategy with your party. You may get into trouble for violating model code of conduct rules. This instrument belongs to the government.



No need to look in there, sir. We searched the room thoroughly. There are no hidden cameras or tape recorders. You can invite your friends safely!



The party has unanimously decided not to let you stand for the elections but has requested your wife to contest, as woman power is on the rise. You have to take care of the kitchen etc. from now on!



What's the matter with these people? I gave him all the good news—that Sensex is soaring, the stock market is booming, the economy is fine and that we won the match against Australia. Still he is grumbling and complaining!



Look at that! I invited him for a cup of tea to discuss the political alliance, the coming polls etc. He came, gulped down the tea and scooted away!



Fair enough, do not split the party now. We will work with unity and friendship till the elections are over and then split.



*He feels his election speech is pretty dull and serious.
He wants to add some feel-good statements.*



In the last five years of my term, I couldn't fulfil any of my promises because of our party's infighting, allegations of scam etc. Please vote us to power this time, and we will carry out all the old promises.



Here are all the election speeches you made during your long political career as CPI member, as BJP member, as Congressman etc. You can choose whichever you need for your campaign.



He has already started projecting his grandson as the future CM of the state.



What's this I hear? You want to be gentle, dignified, civil and friendly in your campaign! What's the idea—you want us to win the election or lose it?



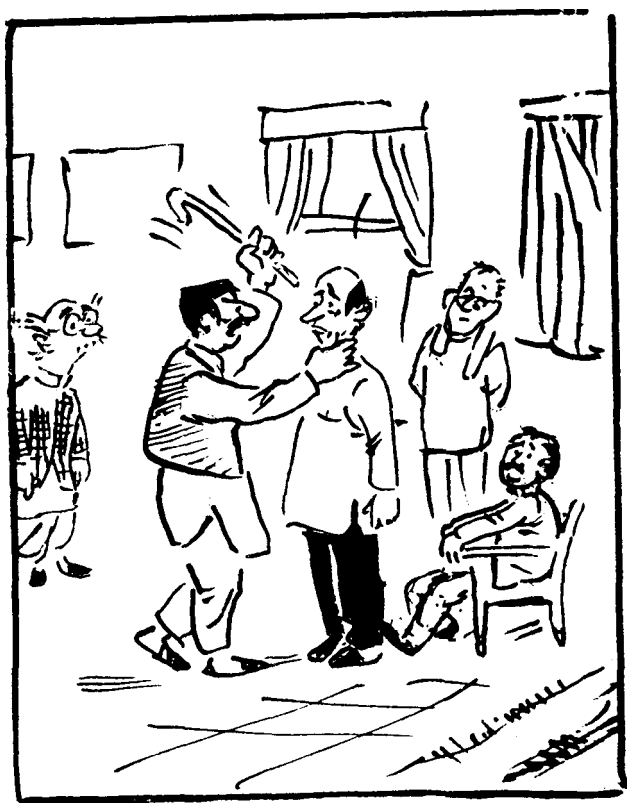
The function went off very well. He kick-started the election campaign but failed to see the table in front of him!



Why are so few people seen in the streets? Because most people in this town are involved in the stamp scam and are detained in police stations.



I knew this would happen. Instead of putting the picture on the stamp, this chap Telgi has put his own portrait!



Don't you dare introduce me to your friends as the one involved in the stamp paper scam. What do you take me for? I'm involved in the cellphone scam. Remember, or else...!



No, mother, I didn't take any chocolates. They must have walked away somewhere. They have life in them, you know!



No, they aren't practising cricket. They are rehearsing expressing joy in the event of winning the match.



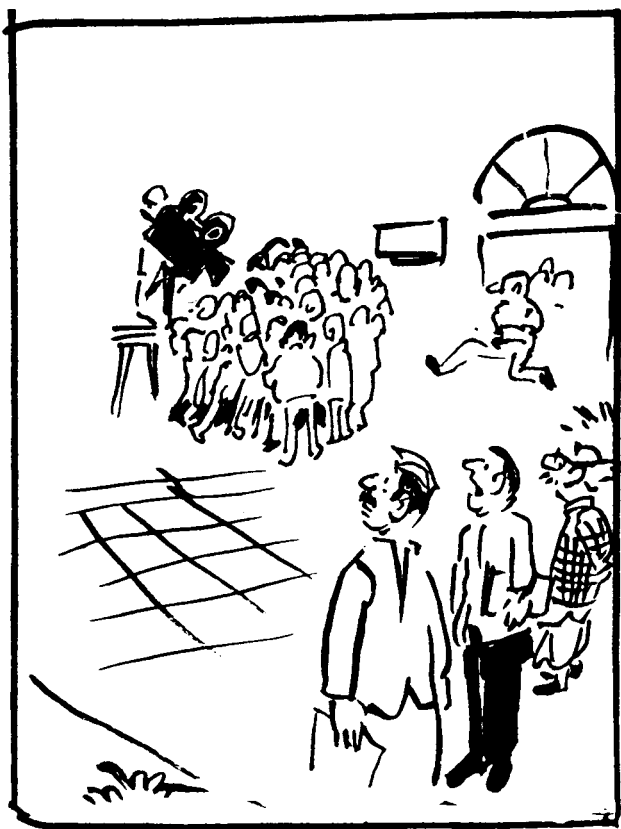
That is not necessary, sir. We know you are a famous cricket star. Just a gentle smile would do.



Can't we do something about the playback singer who joined our party? He starts singing every time I start my speech!



*No, that handsome fellow is a movie star campaigning
for the one on this side!*



We should never have asked that movie star to campaign for you. The entire audience is crowding him for autographs and photographs, ignoring your presence!



He is a famous singer, dancer and actor, sir. He has already joined BJP, but he is prepared to defect to our party if we double the amount he has received from them. I think we should agree.



We have absolutely no objection to letting famous movie stars join our party and campaign for us. But the person should be of Indian origin!



So many movie stars have entered politics. Why don't you politicians become movie stars? You act so well—expressing pity for the poor, horror at corruption, shock at crime and so on.



...if elected, I promise each adult a minimum of 100 roubles, I mean, rupees, a month...



*Utterly backward. No road, no water, no electricity.
But I have always stood from this constituency in every
election!*



Don't you fellows read newspapers or listen to ministers speak? India is shining and the feel-good factor is spreading all over, and you chaps have come with good old demands!



Thank you, I'm feeling good, all right. But if you drop a coin in this, I'll feel better, sir!



Stop making good old promises like giving food, water, removing poverty etc. Now start promising TVs, cellphones, computers, movie theatres etc. Remember, India is shining and everyone is feeling good!



Thanks for making India shine! But can't you make it shine a little less? It has dried up our wells, ponds, rivers. We have no water to drink....!



Want to feel good? Just have a look at the assets declared by politicians, ministers, movie stars—all in crores and lakhs, cars, estates. We are not a poor country, after all!



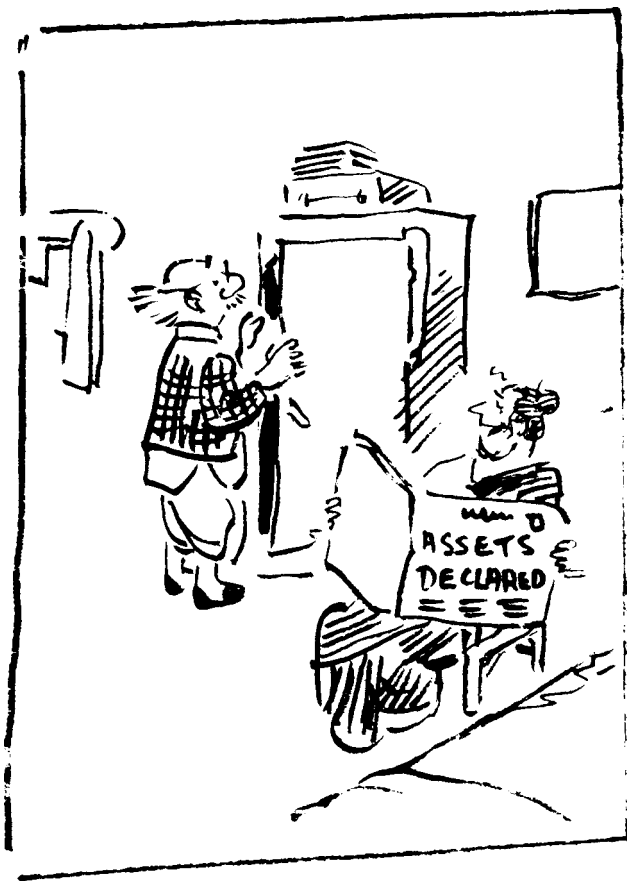
I went there to campaign. But they wouldn't let me, saying their village is shining and the people are feeling good!



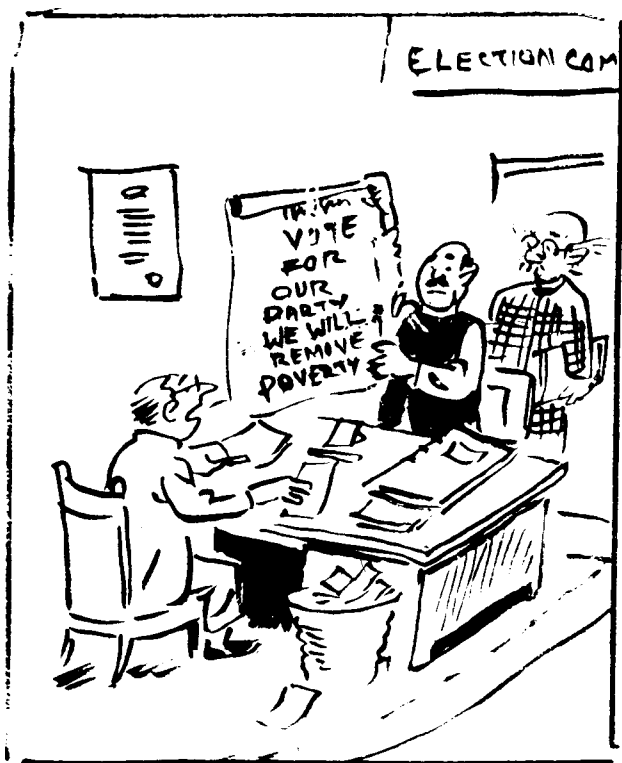
*Yes, 40% of the candidates have criminal records.
Amazing why Veerappan did not stand for the elections!*



Good you forgot to mention these assets here under the bed!



Who says they have not removed poverty? They have wiped out their own state of poverty! Ten crore in cash, bungalows, cars, acres of farmlands... that's what each of them has!



I am afraid you can't use it. The Congress party will object. It has been using it for years!



No, I told you, you can't join any political party! Things have not come to that state yet!



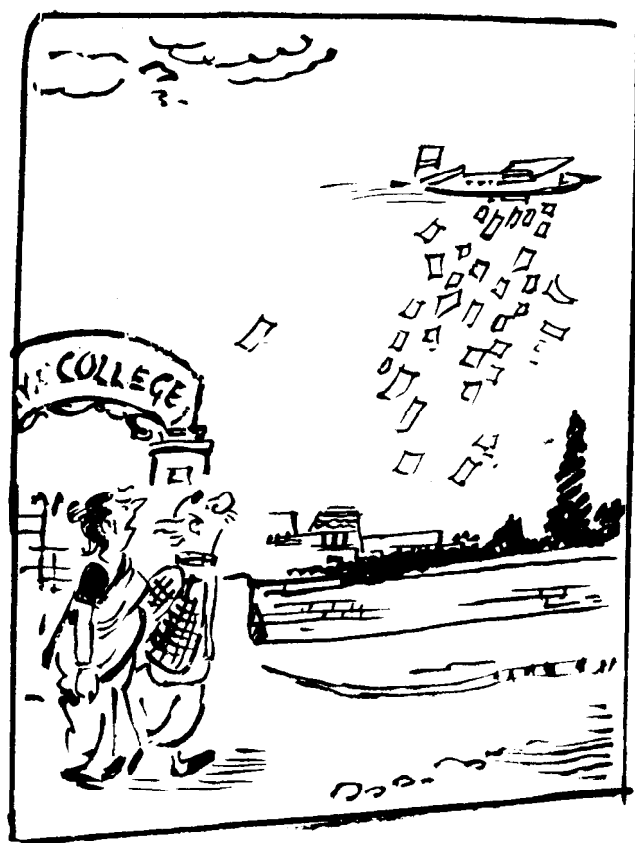
Why has no one turned up at the office today? Is a cricket match on somewhere in the world?



Selecting the team to go to Pakistan has become a tough job!



He became a millionaire by selling papers. No, not newspapers but exam question papers and stamp papers!



The chaps who are leaking out the exam papers are becoming bolder and bolder with the passing of each day!



No, I don't deal in fake stamp papers any more. I have switched over to leaking fake exam papers!



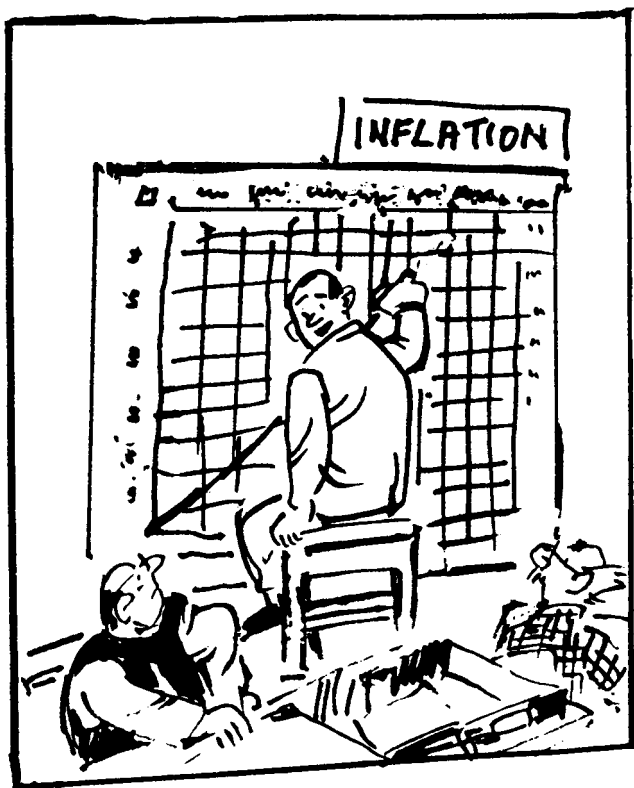
These question papers are for leaking and those for holding re-examination!



Get yourself a shave, put on some decent clothes and have a couple of photographs taken... Who knows they may come to our dwellings too to issue permits!



It's only the postman, sir, not a policeman!



Shall I extend it further up to include the coming two days, sir? I am taking a couple of days off, you see!



No, I didn't fill up the potholes, sir. The people here wouldn't let me. They use the rainwater collected in them as there is no proper water supply here!



He is quite honest, sir. We can select him. Only two cases of scam against him.



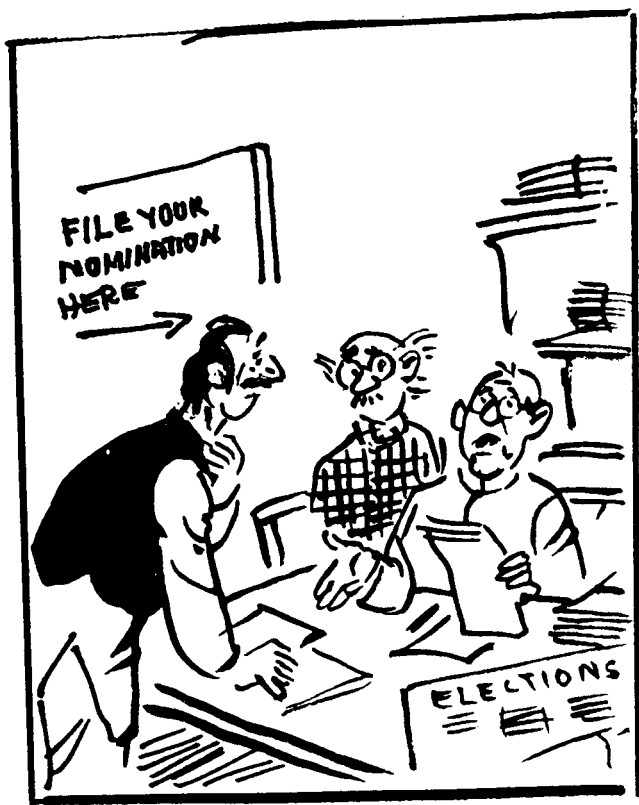
Which party do I belong to now? Congress... sorry, no, JD... sorry, it's BJP... did you get it? NCP...



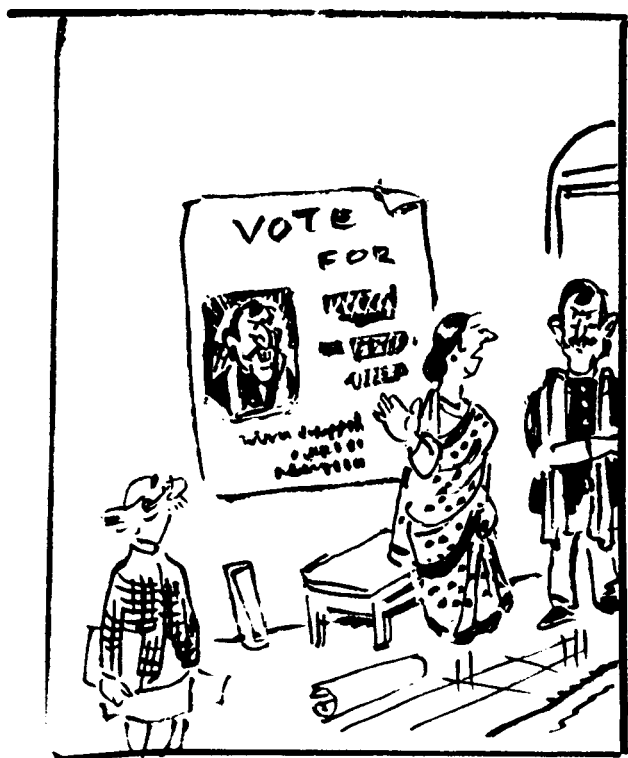
Give me your vote and I'll see to it that your slum is untouched and left as it is.



Certainly we will vote for you. So far we haven't said 'no' to anyone who has asked for it.



My criminal record? Sorry, I don't have any!



Surely you are not going to use that horrible photo of yours for your poll campaign! You will never get a vote with that!



Election gimmick! Looks like they are pretty nervous this time!



They have simplified our bother of drafting the manifesto for the coming polls. They are demanding food, water, shelter etc. We will promise them all that in our manifesto...



It is for showing at the election meetings how clean he is.



No water? In the city, we don't have water either. You are lucky you don't have electric power. We have, but it's cut all the time!

Born on 23rd October 1924, R. K. Laxman is widely regarded as India's greatest ever cartoonist. His creation "The Common Man" has been widely appreciated by one and all for over fifty years. With his brilliant wit, R. K. Laxman has time and again brought a smile to our lips through his well known cartoon strip "You Said It".

